DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 292 745 SO 019 065

AUTHOR Kelly, Diana K.
TITLE The Nineteenth Century Experience of Women College Students: A Profile of the Women and Their Motivations.
PUB DATE 9 Dec 87
NOTE 51p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Access to Education; Coeducation; *Educational Background; *Educational History; *Educational Opportunities; Equal Education; Higher Education; Social Science Research; *Womens Education; Womens Studies

ABSTRACT

The early women college students were pioneers. They had a difficult time obtaining an opportunity for a college education, because college was not thought to be necessary for the women of the 19th century. By overcoming many obstacles, these early college graduates were able to reap the rewards of an intellectually stimulating career. This study of women's struggle for equal education: (1) outlines the historical background of women's education in the United States; (2) provides a chronology of educational opportunities; (3) profiles early women college students; (4) delineates the objectives of early women college educators; and (5) discusses the careers of college graduates. Female seminaries were the earliest opportunities for formal education. In 1839, the Georgia Female College opened in Macon, Georgia as the first college for women to award the bachelor's degree. With the opening of this school, opportunities for women continued to grow. The women who were founders of colleges and the professors in early women's colleges provided the necessary role models and encouragement for women college students. Highly motivated pioneer women college students completed their college education and attained greater accomplishments. Today's college educators should know that pioneer college students from different ethnic groups are struggling for a college education and need the same kind of encouragement that early women pioneers had. Four pages of references are included. (SM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED292745

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN COLLEGE STUDENTS:

A Profile of the Women and Their Motivations

Diana K. Kelly
December 9, 1987

Fullerton College
Fullerton, California

30019065

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
DIANA K. KELLY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
Introduction	1
I. Historical Background	2
A. Preconditions for the Higher Education of Women	2
B. Chronology of Women's Seminaries and Academies	5
C. Chronology of Early Higher Education for Women	7
D. Chronology of Women's Higher Education Opportunities	9
E. Chronology of Opportunities for Women as Students of Graduate and Professional Schools	12
II. Profile of the Early Women College Students	14
A. Characteristics of Pre-Collegiate Women	14
B. Social Background of Early College Women	17
C. Barriers to College Attendence for Women	18
D. Personal Characteristics of Early Women College Students	21
E. Characteristics of Women College Students of the Late Nineteenth Century	24
III. Objectives of Early Women College Educators	26
A. Practical Education for Women	26
B. Providing Equal Opportunities for the Education of Women	27
C. Training for Social Reform	28
D. Preparation foe Charitable Activities	28
E. Career Preparation	28
F. Religious Motivations	29
G. Educating the Whole Woman	30
IV. Women's Motivations for Attending College	31
A. Love of Learning and Equal Educational Opportunities	31

IV. Women's Motivations for Attending College (continued)

B. Career Motivations 32

C. Social Reform 34

D. Religious Motivations 34

E. Escape from Society Life 35

V. The Early Women College Graduates: The Influence of the College Experience 36

A. Personal Characteristics of Female College Graduates 36

B. Careers 38

C. Careers in Social Reform, Charitable Work, and Religion 40

Conclusion: Implications for Today 42

References 44

Introduction

From the earliest days in America, innovators and pioneers have been highly respected. This country was founded and settled by pioneers. Even today, Americans are fascinated with those who were the "first": the first man in space, the first female vice-presidential candidate, and the first team to fly an airplane around the world without refueling. We admire innovators because they are so rare. Everett Rogers, in his study of innovations, estimates that within today's American population approximately 2.5 percent are innovators: those who are venturesome, desire the hazardous, the rash, the daring, the risky, are eager to try new ideas, and accept setbacks [181]. What is so different about these people? What compelled them to achieve their "firsts"?

The first women who were involved in higher education were pioneers and innovators. They broke out of the mold to do something that women had not done before. In the nineteenth century, it was generally believed that women should have some basic education; but women had no need for higher education because they would probably "waste" their advanced learning on marriage and family. Why should women attend college if they would be unlikely to use their learning?

It is easy to look back and admire the innovators in women's higher education, and easy to forget that they were considered "bluestockings" at that time by the public at large. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was not considered normal, or even ladylike, for women to desire rigorous intellectual activities. How were the women college students different from other women during the period? Why did these unusual women become college students and academics? What was their motivation for becoming involved in higher education?

Thesis

Women who supported the idea of women's higher education in the eighteenth century, and women who were involved in higher education in the nineteenth century as founders of colleges, college teachers, and college students were very unusual. Their social backgrounds and motivations must have been radically different from the norm of the majority of women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Part 1

Historical Background

Introduction

For a better understanding of the motivations of women who became college students, it is important to be aware of the conditions which existed for women who wanted to pursue a higher education. It is necessary, therefore, to discuss the sequence of events which led to the founding of women's colleges, and the opportunities which eventually opened up for women in coeducational institutions. The sequence of events starts in the colonial and revolutionary years with the early education of women, and progresses to the early nineteenth century academies which prepared women for higher education. These academies gave birth to the early women's colleges. Finally coeducational colleges and graduate schools were opened to women.

A. Preconditions for the Higher Education of Women

1. Colonial America

There were few opportunities for obtaining anything but a haphazard education in the colonial period. Because of the scarcity of schools and the difficulties in travelling great distances, the majority of children were educated in the home by their mothers [Boorstin, Colonial 187; Polakoff, et al. 84]. "Dame schools" were informal establishments operated by women in which both boys and girls learned the three R's. The Puritans believed that all children should be educated primarily for the salvation of their souls [Furnas 230]. Parents were obligated under the Massachusetts Act of 1642 to teach their children to read in order that they might understand the principles of religion and the laws of the country [Morison, Intellectual 66]. In 1647, Massachusetts law required that every town with fifty families should appoint a school master to teach all of the children to read and write, and to prepare boys for the university [89]. In the 1680's and 1690's private grammar schools were started in New England to compete with the public schools. In 1692 a private school in Boston provided girls and boys with instruction in Latin and English [78].

Through studies of the number of signatures in the manuscript court records of three Massachusetts counties it was determined that only about forty percent of the women could sign their names in the seventeenth century, but nearly ninety percent of the men could sign their names [83]. Higher education was available only to men. Before 1700 a total of 465 men were

college graduates in America [57]. The three major colleges which existed in the early eighteenth century, Harvard, Yale, and William and Mary, graduated a total of about fourteen hundred men before 1747 [Boorstin, Colonial 183].

In the early and mid-eighteenth century the education provided for the girls of upper and middle class families consisted of the practical accomplishments: cooking, sewing, embroidery, and other skills which would be useful in running a household. The reason for teaching girls other intellectual subjects was to provide them with the information they would need in teaching their own young children in the future [Hill 45]. However, many cautioned against too much learning for women. Lady Sarah Pennington wrote in 1761 that education "serves only to render them useless wives, and impertinent companions" [56].

2. Revolutionary America

Jefferson explained why he educated his own daughter Patsy with a thorough plan of reading: "The chance that in marriage she will draw a blockhead I calculate at about fourteen to one, and of course . . . the education of her family will probably rest on her own ideas and direction without assistance" [Boorstin, Colonial 187]. In the eighteenth century women were considered good teachers for small children, but were considered to be unfit for rigorous intellectual activities [Pitt 131]. During Revolutionary times, about half of the women in New England could sign their names [Cott 101].

After the Revolutionary War, the idea of girls gaining the right to attend school became more popular. By 1790 girls were generally allowed to attend the public schools during the summer when they were not being used by the boys. During these summer sessions girls learned reading and sewing [103]. Several existing private boys academies also started to admit girls during this time. Timothy Dwight's academy in Greenfield, Connecticut allowed girls to enroll in the mid-1780s. William Woodbridge opened a co-educational academy in Medford, Massachusetts in the late eighteenth century which enrolled twice as many girls as boys [113].

In New England several private academies for young ladies started in the late eighteenth century. Susanna Rowson opened a girls academy in Boston in 1797 which was later moved to Medford. In 1792 Sarah Pierce started a female academy in her home in Litchfield, Connecticut which later became the Litchfield Female Academy [115]. The typical curriculum in these female academies consisted of "accomplishments" and "ornamental instruction": French, English reading and writing, drawing, embroidery, and piano. Parents wanted their daughters to have these ornamental accomplishments because they became more marriageable [Hill 47]. Because of the

parental demand for this type of female education, it was difficult for the female academies to adopt a more rigorous academic curriculum.

There were a few signs of a change in attitude toward female education. The Moravian Young Ladies Seminary opened in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1742 for the daughters of Moravian families. In 1785 the highly regarded Moravian Seminary was opened to all girls. Families sent their daughters to Bethlehem for an intellectually stimulating education as well as for moral development [Norton 283]. Benjamin Rush, in his speech at the opening of the Young Ladies Academy in Philadelphia in 1787, encouraged the idea of a "useful" education for women: reading, spelling, grammar, history, arithmetic, bookkeeping, science to aid in the sickroom and kitchen, and Bible instruction [Cott 105; Rudolph, Essays, 28; Smith 259-265]. The Young Ladies Academy of Philadelphia was influenced by the Moravian Seminary [Woody 1: 333]. However, it was primarily modeled after the boys academies which existed at the time because the men who founded the academy had been educated in the boys academies. The teachers were graduates of Yale , Princeton, Columbia, and Brown [Berkin 70]. Girls studied grammar, arithmetic, geography, and oratory, just as the boys did [69]. By 1788 there were a hundred students attending the Young Ladies Academy [Woody 1: 334]. Other female academies opened in the same period: Jedediah Morse's school in New Haven opened in 1783; Timothy Dwight's academy opened in 1785; Bingham's school for girls opened in Boston in 1784; and a female academy opened in Medford in 1789 [339-343]. However, these schools had no official charter and no guarantee that they would be in continuous operation. In 1792 the Young Ladies Academy was the first female academy to receive a charter under Pennsylvania law [337].

The girls who were students of the Young Ladies Academy were generally from the wealthy families of Philadelphia, although a few girls were the daughters of college graduates. A boy's education was considered to be an investment: boys would earn back the tuition in the future. But because girls were not expected to work, a girl's education was considered an expensive luxury which would not be paid back in a future job [Berkin 84].

In addition to Benjamin Rush, there were other men who were in favor of a good education for girls in the late eighteenth century. Noah Webster believed that women should be educated in order to better educate their own children. For this reason, women's education should "enable them to implant in the tender mind such sentiments of virtue, propriety, and dignity as are suited to the freedom of our governments" [Rudolph, Essays 68]. Webster also believed that women's "influence in controlling the manners of a nation is another powerful reason" for women to be educated [69]. Simeon Doggett, in his address at the opening of the Bristol Academy in 1796, had

similar reasons for advocating the education of women: ". . . wherever ladies are highly improved by a well-directed and refined education, there the gentlemen will soon become so" [159]. Generally these men were advocating education for the improvement of American society through the influence of mothers over their children, and for the betterment of men's manners and education, but not necessarily for the idea of an equal opportunity for the education of women.

The idea of well-educated women was not yet accepted by the general public. In 1783 twelve-year-old Lucinda Foote was given the entrance examinations for Yale. She had received tutoring in Latin and Greek, and was found to be "fully qualified, except in regard to sex, to be received as a pupil of the Freshman class of Yale University" [Woody 2: 137]. In 1790, Judith Sargent Murray stated in her address, "On the Equality of the Sexes," that women who desired more advanced levels of education were "so degraded, as to be allowed no other ideas, than those which are suggested by the mechanism of a pudding or the sewing the seams of a garment" [Cott 106]. Murray also complained of "the dependence for which women are uniformly educated" [Kerber 204]. Although education was becoming more available to females, it was generally not intellectually as stimulating as the education which was available to males at that time.

B. Chronology of Women's Seminaries and Academies: Preparation for Higher Education

1807 A female academy opened in Pittsfield, Massachusetts [Norton 293; Woody 1: 342].

1809 A female academy opened in Bath, Maine, and the first major female academy opened in the south: the Mordecai academy, started by Josephy Mordecai in North Carolina [Norton 293].

1814 Catherine Fiske opened a female academy in New Hampshire, and Emma Willard founded the Middlebury Academy in Vermont [Cott 116; Woody 1: 342].

1816 Alvan Sanderson started a co-educational academy in Ashfield, Massachusetts. Mary Lyon was a student here in 1817 [Berkin 181].

1818 The Byfield Academy was opened by the Reverend Joseph Emerson and his wife Rebeccah Hasseltine [Cott 116; Woody 1: 342].

1821 Emma Willard founded the Troy Female Seminary at Troy, New York [Rudolph, American 310; Woody 1: 342].

1822 Zilpah Grant started the Adams Academy in New Hampshire [Cott 116].

1823 George B. Emerson opened a private secondary school for girls in Boston [Woody 1: 342].

1828 Catherine Beecher founded the Hartford Female Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut [Rudolph, American 310]. Zilpah Grant and Mary Lyon opened another female academy in Ipswich, Massachusetts [Cott 117; Woody 1: 342].

1835 Wheaton Female Seminary was founded [Morison, Oxford 291].

1837 Mount Holyoke Seminary opened as the first American college for women, with 80 students [Ingalls 65; Green, E. 170]. Mary Lyon opened Mount Holyoke as the first institution of higher learning, if not collegiate learning, which was intended for daughters of middle-income families [Berkin 178; Rudolph, American 310].

Before Civil War Generally only the upper classes were able to afford a private seminary education for their daughters. After the Civil War public high schools were more commonly available for all girls [Curti 174].

1878 The Girls' Latin School opened in Boston as a public college preparatory school [Solomon 51].

1893 In Philadelphia girls could not be prepared for college in the public high schools because they did not teach Latin, German or French in the Girl's High School [Talbot 3].

Summary

A seminary education was becoming somewhat more accessible for girls as more seminaries and academies continued to open in the early part of the nineteenth century. However, the schools tended to attract girls from wealthy families because the families had to have sufficient income to pay for their daughters' education. Apparently there was sufficient interest on the part of the daughters of the wealthy families to support the number of schools which opened in the early nineteenth century. Catherine Fiske's school attracted twenty-five hundred girls between 1814 and 1837 [Woody 1: 343]. Attending a seminary was the necessary preparation for college education which became available in later years. Girls who attended an academically sound female academy were then prepared to attend a college, if they desired.

Some of the early nineteenth century academies and seminaries were more academically rigorous than others. Some academies continued the eighteenth century tradition of emphasizing ornamental "accomplishments." John Gardiner, in his 1809 address to the Boston Female Asylum, accused the "ornamental" female education of creating a gap between the intellectual development of men and women. He strongly urged a more rigorous program of education for girls because of their "most powerful influence on society, as wives, mistresses of families, and as mothers" [Cott 118], the same argument used nearly twenty years earlier by men who advocated women's

education.

There were a few others who were willing to speak out in favor of women's education. Emma Willard, in her 1819 address "On the Education of Women," complained that the eduction of women had generally been neglected, and had been haphazard. Willard recommended a separate female seminary to meet the needs of women: ". . . the seminary here recommended, will be as different from those appropriated to the other sex, as the female character and duties are from the male" [Willard 3]. The idea of providing a separate education which was suitable for women was less radical than the idea of providing women with an education similar to a "male" education.

Joseph Emerson said in his 1822 Discourse on Female Education, that "the period is not remote, when female institutions very greatly superior to the present, will not only exist, but be considered as important as are now our colleges for the education of our sons" [Berkin 190]. One of his former students, Mary Lyon, was instrumental in beginning to shape these "greatly superior" female institutions which were the necessary predecessor of women's colleges. Despite the futuristic statement of Joseph Emerson, it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that a higher education for women started to become somewhat acceptable, if not yet "considered important."

C. Chronology of Early Higher Education for Women: Women's Colleges Lower in Standards than the Best Men's Colleges

1839 Georgia Female College, later Wesleyan College, opened in Macon Georgia as the first college for women to award the bachelor's degree. After a year and a half of study, the first students were awarded their degrees in 1840 [Woody 2: 161, 167; Morison and Commager 515].

1840's Normal Schools for the training of teachers opened in Massachusetts [Polakoff 300].

1842 Wesleyan Female College opened in Cincinnati, Ohio, with a three-year college course [Woody 2: 167].

1851 Mary Sharp College opened as the earliest women's college to require Latin and Greek in the four-year course. In 1855 the first three students graduated from Mary Sharp College [171].

1852 Oxford Female College was chartered, and offered a four-year course of study in 1855 [168].

1853 Ohio Wesleyan Female College was established in Delaware [169].

1854 Illinois Conference Female College and Rockford Female Seminary offered a four-year advanced course of study, and St. Louis Female Institute offered a three-year collegiate course [170-171].

1855 Elmira Female College opened with much higher standards of admission than any previous women's colleges. Elmira required a minimum age of sixteen, unlike most institutions which admitted girls at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and Elmira required that girls complete the preparatory course before being admitted to the collegiate course [175-176].

1856 Jacksonville Female Academy offered a three-year college course [171].

1861 Maine Wesleyan Seminary opened with a four-year collegiate course. The first students graduated in 1865 [178].

1865 Vassar College opened with the strongest classical curriculum in any women's college at that time. The endowment for starting Vassar provided the best facilities, buildings, and equipment of any women's colleges up to that time. However, the standards of admission were still slightly below the best men's colleges: Greek was not required for admission, and girls were admitted at the age of fifteen [180-181].

1868 Wells College started a four-year college course, although admissions standards were slightly below those of Vassar and Elmira [182].

1875 The Bureau of Education had reports of 209 female institutions of higher education in the United States [185].

Summary

With Georgia Female College, the opportunities for advanced study for women began to grow. As the opportunities grew, the standards also became more rigorous as many women's colleges attempted to come close to the standards of the best men's colleges of the time. The term "college" seemed to be used indiscriminately by those institutions who wished to be perceived as colleges as well as by institutions which were providing a college education with a legitimate bachelor's degree comparable to that of a men's college. In 1851 Catherine Beecher spoke about the so-called colleges: "Those female institutions in our land which are assuming the ambitious name of colleges, have, not one of them, as yet, secured the real features which constitute the chief advantage of such institutions. They are merely high schools" [Rudolph, American 312]. In analyzing the colleges, Woody determined, through a careful study of the admissions requirements and the curriculum, that none of the women's colleges mentioned in the above chronology was equal in standards to the

best of the men's colleges. However, of the women's colleges mentioned, the three with the highest standards were Elmira, Wells, and Vassar. The chronology shows that there were increasing opportunities for a girl to pursue an advanced education and earn a bachelor's degree in a women's college, even if the course of study was not necessarily as advanced as that of some of the best men's colleges.

D. Chronology of Women's Higher Education Opportunities: Coeducational Colleges and Women's Colleges

1833 Oberlin College was founded with the unconventional intention of providing all populations with the opportunity for a higher education: men, women, and blacks [Morison, Oxford 275].

1837 Oberlin enrolled four women and became the first coeducational college [Ingalls 65].

1847 Lucy Stone became the first Massachusetts woman to receive a bachelor's degree when she graduated from Oberlin [Solomon 43].

1852 Antioch was opened to female students by Horace Mann [Woody 2: 237].

1856 Iowa University opened as a coeducational university [238].

1863 University of Wisconsin was opened to women students for teacher training [Rudolph, American 314; Solomon 53].

1869 Kansas, Indiana, and Minnesota State Universities accepted women [Solomon 53].

After Civil War Northwestern, Syracuse, Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio State started to admit women. [Sinclair 99].

1870 University of California opened as a coeducational institution [Solomon 53].

1870 Jennie Spencer won a state scholarship and became the first woman student at Cornell [Conable 65].

1870 Women were admited to 30.7 percent of all existing colleges [Woody 2: 252].

1870 A total of eleven thousand women were enrolled as college students. Women made up twenty-one percent of all college students [Newcomer 46].

1870's Many of the western land grant colleges were founded as coeducational institutions [Boorstin, Democratic 487].

1873 According to the Report of the Commissioner of Education of the United States, a total of 8,141 women students were attending coeducational colleges. Of these, 5,622 were in the preparatory department, and 2,519 were in the collegiate department [Woody 2:

251]

1873 Of the ninety-seven coeducational colleges, sixty-seven were in the western United States [Woody 2: 251].

1873 Boston University was established with admission of women to every academic department [Solomon 51].

1875 Of the 12,616 women college students, 3,044 were enrolled in coeducational colleges, and 9,572 attended women's colleges [Woody 2: 252].

1875 Smith College opened as the first women's college to offer a course of study identical to that of the best men's colleges. Admission standards were equal to those of Amherst and Harvard. In the same year, Wellesley opened with a similar program of study and very high admissions standards [Woody 2: 182; Rudolph, American 318].

1879 The Harvard Annex opened with twenty-seven women students [Ingalls 66; Morison, Three Centuries 392]. Graduates of the program were awarded a certificate, not a degree [Woody 2: 308].

1880 The number of coeducational colleges grew to 51.3 percent of all colleges [Woody 2: 252].

1880 A total of forty thousand women were enrolled in colleges, making up 33.4 percent of the total college student population [Newcomer 46].

1880 Bryn Mawr was founded as a women's college with high standards and a rigorous academic program [Boorstin, Democratic 487].

1887 Sophie Newcomb Memorial College for Women opened as a coordinate college to Tulane University [Woody 2: 314].

1888 Mills College in California awarded its first bachelor's degrees to three graduates [Keep 88].

1888 Mount Holyoke was chartered as a college [Rudolph, American 319].

1889 Barnard College was organized as a coordinate women's college to Columbia College, with Columbia faculty serving as professors [Woody 2: 313; Solomon 55].

1890 A total of fifty-six thousand women were enrolled in colleges, making up 35.9 percent of the total college student population [Newcomer 46].

1891 Brown University's Women's College (Pembroke) opened as a coordinate college to Brown University [Woody 2: 316; Rudolph, American 320].

1892 Tufts College started to admit women and became a coeducational college. However, women were again removed from Tufts in 1910 when the women's coordinate college, Jackson College, opened [Woody 2: 319].

1892 Stanford was reestablished with women admitted as students [Solomon 57].

1894 The Harvard Annex was renamed "Radcliffe College" and started to award bachelor's degrees [Ingalls 66; Woody 2: 310; Morison, Three Centuries 392].

1900 Coeducational colleges grew in popularity: 71.6 percent of all colleges admitted men and women. More women attended coeducational colleges than women's colleges in 1900: 19,959 women were enrolled in coeducational colleges, and 15,977 in women's colleges [Woody 2: 252].

1900 A total of eighty-five thousand women were enrolled in colleges, making up 36.8 percent of the total college student population. Women college students were only 2.8 percent of all women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one [Newcomer 46].

1907 According to the 1907 Report of the Commissioner of Education of the United States, there were 126 Women's Colleges in the United States. Of the total student body of 29,448 women, 7,337 were enrolled in the Preparatory departments, 19,997 in the Collegiate departments, and 278 in the Graduate departments of the women's colleges [Woody 2: 186-187].

Summary

Opportunities for women to attend college increased as the number of coeducational colleges and coordinate colleges increased. In the beginning, Oberlin was the only college offering an equal opportunity for higher education to men and women. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, women had a choice of either attending a women's college or Oberlin. The few coeducational colleges in the 1850's were joined by many more in the 1870's as a result of the Morrill Land Grant Act. By the end of the nineteenth century there were substantially more coeducational colleges than women's colleges. More women wanted a higher education, and a higher education became more accessible as more colleges were opened to women.

It is important to note that nearly one quarter of all female college students attending women's colleges were enrolled in the preparatory department in 1907. This indicates that for many girls, college preparation was still generally not available in high schools.

By 1900 the women who attended college were still quite unusual when contrasted with the general population of women in the United States. But with increased numbers, women made up over one third of all college students. The women college students of the end of the nineteenth century were not as unusual as the women college student "pioneers" of the pre-Civil War period.

E. Chronology of Opportunities for Women as Students of Graduate and Professional Schools.

1849 Elizabeth Blackwell received the first medical degree awarded to a woman in the United States at Geneva College, New York [Woody 2: 368].

1850 The Female Medical College of Pennsylvania was incorporated [353].

1851 Antoinette Brown Blackwell was the first woman to graduate from a school of Theology in the United States. She graduated with a degree in theology from Oberlin [368].

1852 The Boston Female Medical School changed its name to the New England Female Medical College. A three-year medical course was offered. The first six graduates finished the program in 1855 [353].

1860 Olympia Brown Willis was admitted to the theology department of St. Lawrence University although there was no precedent for women theology students at that institution [368].

1870 Ada Kepley was the first woman to receive a law degree. She received her degree from the Union College of Law [373].

1885 Bryn Mawr started to offer graduate study to any women holding a bachelor's degree [334].

1891 Brown and Yale opened their graduate schools to women [335]. In the first year of women's admission to the Yale Graduate School, twenty-three women enrolled [Kelley 283].

1892 The University of Chicago opened as a coeducational institution for undergraduate and graduate study [Woody 2: 336].

1892 Two women were the first to enter the Columbia College Graduate School [335].

1892 According to the Report of the Commissioner of Education of the United States, there were 484 women graduate students and 3,081 men graduate students [338].

1893 Johns Hopkins Medical School opened as the first coeducational medical school. In the first class of sixteen students, three were women [358].

1894 Harvard opened the graduate school to women students. However, any women who completed the requirements for an advanced degree were awarded a Radcliffe diploma [336].

1898 The University of Chicago reported that a total of ten women had completed the Ph.D., and eleven women had completed the Master's degree in the first five years of the university: 1892-1897 [336].

1898 Millicent Shim was the first woman to earn a doctorate at the University of California [Rossiter 165].

1900 Aproximately two hundred women had taken the law degree by 1900 [Woody 2: 379].

1900 According to the Report of the Commissioner of Education, there were a total of 1,982 women graduate students and 4,883 men graduate students [338].

1900 A total of 228 Ph.D. degrees had been awarded to women by 1900. Of these, half were awarded by four universities: Yale, Chicago, Cornell, and New York University. [Eells 647, 649-651].

1916 Between 1892 and 1916, 110 women earned a Yale Ph.D. [Kelley 283-284].

Summary

By 1900 the pioneer women college students were those who were pursuing graduate work. As noted in the previous section, attending college had become more common for women after the Civil War, but attending graduate school was still quite unusual. The earliest advanced degrees for women were those which were awarded for the professions: first medical degrees, then theology, and finally law in 1870. The idea of women pursuing advanced study in other academic fields came a few years later. Women were occasionally allowed to attend graduate classes, but they were not formally involved in graduate programs until Bryn Mawr's graduate program started in 1885. Graduate programs were initially more accessible to women in the western coeducational universities than in the eastern men's universities. It was highly unusual for a woman to earn a Ph.D. degree. By 1900 only 228 women had earned Ph.D. degrees: a tiny percentage of the population of women in the United States. According to a 1984 U.S. Census Bureau survey, the percentage remains small: women who have earned a Ph.D. comprise only two percent of adults in the United States ["Educational Attainment" A36].

Part II

Profile of the Early Women College Students

Introduction

A college education was rare and unconventional for women in the nineteenth century, and particularly rare before the Civil War. Who were the women who pursued a college education? First it is important to understand the characteristics of the pre-collegiate women. These women influenced the women who were born later, when a college education was available. It is also important to understand factors which contributed to the motivations of the early women college students: social background, income, educational attainment of family members, barriers to be overcome, and the personal characteristics of the women college students. These factors will provide a better picture of the unusual women who chose to attend college.

A. Characteristics of Pre-Collegiate Women: Love of Learning

There were well-educated women who were not college students simply because they were not born at the right time. The typical pre-collegiate women were self-educated; they had a great passion for knowledge; they came from well-educated families; and they were often involved in social causes.

Colonial girls and others whose families were not supportive of their education had to take the initiative to find the means by which they could be educated. These girls were generally self-taught through their own reading of books borrowed from their father or brothers [Norton 262]. They were primarily motivated by a love of learning, although part of the motivation may have been the fact that books and formal learning were off-limits to most girls: they were the "forbidden fruit." Generally, not many seventeenth century girls had the high level of motivation required for self-learning [James, Janet 17].

A few fortunate colonial girls received education from well-educated fathers. Cotton Mather educated his daughters in the late seventeenth century in practical household skills as well as arithmetic and accounting, languages, reading and writing, and medicine. Although Mather's son went to Harvard, he didn't believe in the same type of education for his daughters [14-15].

In the eighteenth century, Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, and Judith Sargent Murray were entirely self-educated [Kendall 11; Brink 163; James, Janet 104]. They were raised in upper class families with home environments which stressed intellectual achievement and political activity. Abigail Adams was educated at home by her mother and grandmother. She

received instruction in sewing, music, reading, philosophy and politics. Adams was from an upper-class family, and was very well-read [Pitt 132]. Abigail Adams was an early advocate of women's education. She wrote to her husband, "if we mean to have Heroes, Statesmen and Philosophers, we should have learned women" [Solomon 8]. Mercy Warren's brother, James Otis, attended Harvard and helped her to select good books for her intellectual enjoyment [Brink 163]. Warren is known as a writer of the events of the American Revolution. However she was always concerned about moving out of the "proper sphere" of women. She advised young women, ". . . it may be necessary for you to seem inferior, but you need not be so" [Brink 162]. Judith Sargent Murray shared lessons with her brother as he was preparing for Harvard [James, Janet 104]. Murray, like Warren, also received recognition as a writer of the period. In her essay "On the Equality of the Sexes," she advocated equal education for girls: "The one [male sex] is taught to aspire; . . . the other [female] early confined and limited . . . . Grant that their minds are by nature equal, yet who shall wonder at the apparent superiority, if indeed custom becomes second nature" [108].

Although Mary Wollstonecraft was born in England, her book, A Vindication of the Rights of Women, published in 1792, influenced many American women educators of the early nineteenth century and beyond. Wollstonecraft advocated equal education, wider opportunities of employment, better pay, and removal of political inequities for women [88]. She also believed that women should be educated on the same model as men, and that women should not be educated for the sole purpose of pleasing men [95]. Although her views were quite radical in this period, she influenced the objectives of those who would later provide colleges for women in America.

Mary Moody Emerson, born later in the eighteenth century in 1774, was also self-educated by reading well-respected books. A diary entry indicates her love of learning: "Rose before light every morn'; . . . read Butler's Analogy; commented on the scripture; . . . touched Shakespeare; washed, carded, cleaned house, and baked. . . . There is a secret pleasure in bending to circumstances while superior to them" [Woody 1: 135]. In the late eighteenth century women were encouraged to read in order to carry on an interesting conversation to be good companions to men [James, Janet 43-44], although women such as Emerson and the other self-educated women of the eighteenth century read to satisfy their love of learning.

Two historians estimate that aproximately 25 percent of all New England women alive in the antebellum years taught school at some time in their lives [Norton 291]. Rachel Mordecai helped her father, Joseph Mordecai, by teaching in the Mordecai Academy. Rachel had received the best education available in Richmond in the 1790's, and enjoyed her teaching duties in the early

nineteenth century [293].

Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, born at the beginning of the nineteenth century, started schools, taught in schools (including Bronson Alcott's Temple School), promoted the idea of a kindergarten, and was very involved with the development of education in this country, although she never attended college. Elizabeth Peabody was inspired to learn by her strong-willed mother [Frankfort 3-4].

The girls who attended the early boarding schools and academies felt as if they were at the beginning of an important movement for women. Eliza Southgate, daughter of a wealthy family, wrote home from Wyman's academy in Medford in 1797 that she would "think of the duty that now attends me, to think that here I may drink freely of the fountain of knowledge" [Norton 275]. At the age of eighteen she wrote "The business and pursuits of men require deep thinking, judgement, and moderation . . . . Women who have no such incentives to action suffer all the strong energetic qualities of the mind to sleep in obscurity . . . " [James, Janet 178]. Eliza Southgate corresponded frequently with her male cousin Moses Porter on the subject of "the enlargement of the mind." She responded to one of his letters in 1801, "I can hardly believe you serious when you say that 'the enlargement of the mind will inevitably produce superciliousness and a desire of ascendancy,' . . . . We cannot enlarge and improve our minds without perceiving our weakness. . ." [Merriam 39]. Eliza Southgate held unusually progressive views on the education of women for the time.

Three founders of early academic female seminaries, Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, and Mary Lyon were influenced and inspired by Benjamin Rush's "Thoughts upon Female Education," written in 1787 at a time when this was an unpopular viewpoint [Kendall 22]. Emma Willard was an early advocate of women's education. In 1818 she wrote her "Plan for the Improvement of Female Education" [Kendall 9], and she was the founder of several schools, including the well-respected Troy Academy in New York. The Troy Academy was highly successful, attracting four hundred students per year, and producing twenty-five teachers per year [Woody 1: 346]. Catharine Beecher's father was a well-educated clergyman. Catharine and her sister Harriet founded the Hartford Female Academy in Connecticut [Kendall 11]. Mary Lyon was educated first at a primary school in her hometown of Buckland, Massachusetts. After saving money she had earned from teaching, she was able to attend Emerson's Byfield Academy in Massachusetts [37]. Mary Lyon founded Mount Holyoke Seminary in 1837 [11].

B. Social Background of Early College Women

1. Family Income and Predisposition toward Women's Education

The very early women academy students who later became founders of academies and colleges for women were generally from wealthy and upper-class families which had some interest in educating their daughters. Fathers sent their daughters to a female college in order to "receive the very finest of Christian nurture" [Rudolph, American 313]. Smith graduate and radical Wellesley professor Vida Scudder was one who was from a wealthy family [Bernard 24]. There were a few exceptions: Mary Lyon came from a poor Massachusetts farm family [Curti 180]; and Maria Sanford, first woman college professor at Swarthmore, was born to a poor cobbler's family [Bernard 6]. For this reason they may have felt more responsible to raise the educational level of other women with similar poor backgrounds than the other educators of women.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the views of some families were slowly beginning to change. In 1846 Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown entered Oberlin. Lucy Stone's family did not encourage her to attend college, but Antoinette Brown's family encouraged her to attend Oberlin as her older sister had done several years earlier [Lasser and Merrill 1-2].

All of the women college graduates who later became faculty members of Wellesley by 1910 came from professional, middle-class families. Parents of these girls gave their support to their daughter's education. The mothers particularly encouraged their daughters not to be passive and submissive. In some cases the families made sacrifices to support the education of a talented daughter [Palmieri 198].

Florence Sabin, first female professor at Johns Hopkins, was raised in Vermont by her grandparents after her mother died. Her grandparents encouraged her early education by sending her to a Vermont academy where she gained the Vermont belief that everyone was obliged to use all of the intelligence he or she had [Bernard 12].

2. Educational Background of Family Members

Most of the founders of colleges and many of the early college students came from well-educated families. When she was a young girl Emma Hart Willard had discussions with her father about metaphysics and politics [Curti 178]. Emma Willard had always been accepted by her family, and later her husband, as an intellectual equal [183]. Catharine Beecher's family was quite distinguished: her father was a well-known minister, and her brother and sister, Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, were also successful in their careers [179]. M. Carey Thomas, born in 1857, was a doctor's daughter who was brought up with four younger brothers. She tended to emulate her father, a scholarly man, rather than her society-minded mother. Alice

Freeman Palmer was also the daughter of a physician [Bernard 15-16]. Ellen Swallow Richards was the first woman student at M.I.T., and the first woman faculty member of M.I.T. Her parents were both graduates of the Ipswich academy and had both been teachers. With encouragement from her parents, in 1868 she entered Vassar to begin her study of chemistry [8-9]. Lucy Salmon, professor of history at Vassar, was one of the first women to attend the University of Michigan, graduating in 1872. Her mother had attended the Ipswich, Massachusetts academy founded by Zilpah Grant and Mary Lyon, so Lucy's father was much more receptive to the idea of higher education for his daughter than most fathers of that period [Kendall 213]. The women professors of Wellesley in 1910 had fathers who were ministers, lawyers, doctors, college presidents, and teachers. Many of the mothers had attended female seminaries and were eager for their daughters to obtain even more education [Palmieri 198].

C. Barriers to College Attendence for Women

1. Lack of Academic Preparation

Boy's Academies gave boys the preparation they needed for college, but no systematic form of education for girls existed which would prepare them adequately for college [Rudolph, American 315]. When Smith College opened in 1875, the entrance requirements were equivalent to those of the best men's colleges. For this reason, women who wanted to meet these rigorous requirements generally had to hire a private tutor for instruction in math and ancient languages [Kendall 116].

Because of the lack of opportunity for college preparation, women who attended college in the early years were generally placed in the preparatory department of the women's colleges, or the "Ladies' Department" of the coeducational colleges. The growth of the early women's colleges was held back simply because few girls were fully prepared for collegiate work [McCabe 157]. Only seventy-nine females received the bachelor's degree from Oberlin between 1837 and 1865. The majority, 290 women, completed the less rigorous Oberlin "Ladies' Course" [Taylor 41].

2. Lack of Social Acceptance

A woman's place is in the home. In the nineteenth century, in most parts of the United States, the only appropriate place for women was in the home. Housekeeping responsibilities, it was believed, did not require a college education. At the most an academy education was very adequate for women [Rudolph, American, 315]. Helen Starrett complained in 1885 that even a woman who graduated from college would commonly be told by her parents, "My daughter, your normal condition and destiny is that of wife and mother. Come now and occupy yourself contentedly with domestic tasks until the happy youth appears who shall complete your destiny" [Starrett 15].

There was a fear that too much education would make a woman less likely to marry for two reasons: women with education are less appealing to men; and marriage would be less appealing to women with too much education [Burstyn 41-42].

Many were skeptical, and even hostile toward women's higher education. Thomas Wentworth Higginson said in 1881, "Why is it, that, whenever anything is done for women in the way of education it is called 'an experiment' -- something that is to be long considered, stoutly opposed, grudgingly yielded, and dubiously watched, -- while if the same thing is done for men, its desireableness is assumed as a matter of course, and the thing is done?" [Lasser 49]

The successful experiment of coeducation at Cornell and the opening of Vassar, Smith, and Wellesley started to change the attitudes of the public [Rudolph, American 316]. However, even at the end of the nineteenth century there were those who criticized the purposes of women's higher education. Harvard President Charles Eliot wrote that "the prime motive of the higher education of women should be recognized as the development in women of the capacities and powers which will fit them to make family life and social life more intelligent, more enjoyable, happier, and more productive..." [Frankfort 27].

Women are too frail. Doubts as to the ability of women to withstand the pressures of rigorous intellectual activities were expressed in 1870 by the president of Vassar College, John Howard Raymond: "Has she sufficient moral earnestness and energy of purpose to carry her through? Will thorough training do for her what it does for a man? Will it not destroy feminine grace and delicacy? Will it not break down her physical health?" Raymond was able to answer these questions of the skeptics for the readers of Godey's Lady's Book because he had a strong belief in higher education for women [Baker, 4].

Dr. Edward Hammond Clarke, a well-respected Boston physician, wrote in his 1873 book , Sex in Education, that the health of women would be adversely affected by attending college. He argued that women were frail creatures who would not withstand the rigors of higher education, and therefore would affect the unborn future generation [Baker 65]. His rationale was this: women were at the peak of their reproductive development at the age of entering college, and the energy that would naturally go toward ovarian development was instead going toward learning Latin [68]. Many people believed him; after all he was an expert: a doctor. The book became a best-seller, and many parents became even more reluctant to send their daughters to college [66].

Fortunately there were educated women who were able to intelligently dispute Dr. Clarke's theories. Dr. Alida D. Avery , resident physician and professor of physiology at Vassar, wrote that the symptoms of frailty described by Dr. Clarke had not appeared in the women students of Vassar.

Reverend Olympia Brown, an Antioch graduate of the 1860's, responded that she had "never heard of a young lady in the college requiring a physician's advice" during her college years [72]. Vassar alumnae Frances Wood recalls the healthy Vassar graduates of the late nineteenth century: "I remember hearing one June an enthusiastic person in the audience say of an 'honor girl' of exceptionally attractive personality and vigorous health, as she left the platform, -- 'She had a capital essay and delivered it well, but if she had done nothing more than stand up there and let people look at her for five or ten minutes, it would have paid, and buried this health discussion forever' " [Wood 70].

It is ironic to note that a 1907-08 report on the health of Stanford students showed that during the school year forty percent of the men and thirty-five percent of the women were excused from classes on account of illness. The men lost an average of 4.8 days per absence, the women only 2.0 days [Slosson 167-168].

Women in college are socially unacceptable. M. Carey Thomas, second president of Bryn Mawr [Baker 12], was warned that too much education would scare bachelors away, and "she fancied it might make her a sort of woman devil" [214]. Thomas attended college against the wishes of her parents who believed that college was not the proper place for a daughter of a socially prominent family [Frankfort 31]. Later, when Thomas went to Germany to pursue her doctorate in 1879, she learned from a relative that family friends had stopped asking her parents about her, as "she was considered to have disgraced her parents" [Stock 191]. Logan Pearsall Smith, M. Carey Thomas' cousin, said that the family viewed her desire for a college education "as shocking as a choice as a life of prostitution" [Frankfort 30].

Physician Dorothy Reed attended Johns Hopkins in the 1890's against her family's better judgement. She recalled, "My great aunts . . . were aghast at the idea of my studying medicine. . . . Medicine was distinctly not a ladylike occupation." While she was in college, one of her aunts always explained her absence by saying she was "south for the winter" [Glazer and Slater 1-2].

Alice Freeman Palmer wrote nearly twenty years later, in 1897, "They [girls] fail to go [to college] because they, their parents, and their teachers, do not see clearly the personal benefits distinct from the commercial value of a college training" [Palmer 4-5]. Palmer's convincing book, Why Go to College?, provided girls and their parents with socially acceptable reasons for attending college. One reason was service: "Our American girls themselves are becoming aware that they need the stimulus, the discipline, the knowledge, the interests of the college in addition to the school, if they are to prepare themselves for the most servicable lives" [3]. According to Palmer, girls should have ". . . a special training in some one thing by which she can render

society service, not anateur, but of an expert sort . . ." [4].

3. Lack of Money for Preparation, and for College Education

In the early years of college education for women, many women earned money for college by teaching school for several years following completion of a seminary education. Prominent examples include Lucy Stone, whose parents were not supportive of her college education, and Antoinette Brown, whose parents partly supported her college education [Lasser and Merrill 1-2].

Following the Civil War, poverty in the south kept many girls from attending academies and colleges [Rudolph, American 316]. The girls in the north seemed to be have more opportunities to work their way through college. After graduating from a Vermont academy Florence Sabin taught school to earn money to attend Smith College. When she had graduated from Smith, she taught at Smith to earn money for graduate school [Bernard 12]. Alice Freeman Palmer earned money to attend the University of Michigan [20].

An 1897 issue of Munsey's magazine describes the ambitious girls at Smith College who work their way through college: ". . . there are quite a number, and they exhibit much ingenuity in devising ways and means of self support. One girl is noted for the stylish shirt waists she makes, and her needle is kept busy in this direction. This same girl plays the piano for any dance that may be given. Another almost entirely supports herself with her camera, while a third is correspondent for several newspapers" [Stone 241]. Girls who were determined to go to college found ways to overcome the obstacle of money.

4. Lack of Encouragement in Coeducational Colleges

M. Carey Thomas attended coeducational Cornell in 1877, despite her father's opposition [Baker 12]. She said of her experiences, "There is much that is very hard for a lady in a mixed university and I should not subject any girl to it unless she were determined to have it. . . . It is a fiery ordeal to educate a lady by coeducation" [15]. The men of Cornell resented the women students because they believed that college is no place for a woman. Men continued to resist women students at Cornell until the time of World War I [Frankfort 31].

D. Personal Characteristics of Early Women College Students

1. Competitiveness

Families might have been motivated to send a daughter to a female college if she had shown some outstanding characteristics in her academic work: maybe even doing better in Latin than the boys at the local academy. Some girls showed early competitive spirit, such as outdoing the boys

in footraces or tree-climbing [Rudolph, American 313]. Ellen Swallow Richards was one who was characterized as a tomboy when she was a young girl [James 3: 143].

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, advocate of women's suffrage in the mid-nineteenth century, promised her father after her brother had died, "I will try to be all my brother was." in her autobiography she said, "So I decided to study Greek and learn to manage a horse. I learned to leap a fence and ditch on horseback. . . . Two prizes were offered in Greek. I strove for one and took the second" [Merriam 54-55].

M. Carey Thomas wrote in her diary at the age of fourteen: "If I ever live and grow up my one aim and concentrated purpose shall be and is to show that women can learn, can reason, can compete with man . . . " [Schmidt 138]. Thomas had been competitive from the time she was a young girl. She and a girlfriend decided to learn Greek so that hey could show the boys [Bernard 17]. She had the opportunity to compete with hostile men students at Cornell a few years later. The resistence to women seemed to feed Thomas' competitive spirit rather than diminish it [Frankfort 31].

Christine Ladd-Franklin chose to take the classics course meant for boys who were preparing for Harvard when she was educated at the Wesleyan Academy in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. She successfully competed with the boys, and was valedictorian of her class in 1865. Ladd-Franklin continued her studies at Vassar, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1869 [James 3: 354].

2. Pioneering Spirit

Wellesley undergraduate Abbe Goodloe, in her article in the May 1898 issue of Scribner's Magazine, says, "But after all it is exhilarating to the students of today to be able to say, 'We are the ancients; we are making the college and its history; and the four years of our life here form not only an epoch in our own existence, but in the existence of the college.'" [Stone 334]. There are advantages to being the "first": there are no precedents, no memories, and no set traditions. The early women students set the precedents and created the traditions.

Frances Wood, Vassar alumnae, had a slightly different view of the pioneering spirit. She stated that the first Vassar students were reminded to follow the rules and live up to the high standards for the "good of the college," because "the higher education of women was an experiment, and the whole world was looking on, watching its success or defeat" [Wood 29]. The pioneers were expected to prove themselves and to provide a good example for those who followed.

3. Determination

Alice Freeman Palmer's parents were very reluctant to allow her to attend college in 1872. She was finally able to convince them by promising to put her younger brother through college and

to help her two younger sisters to obtain whatever education they desired [Frankfort 18].

Annie Nathan Meyer, founder of Barnard College, had never attended a school, although she was taught at home by her mother and occasional private tutors. Her father provided her with books, but discouraged her from attending college, saying "You will never be married. Men hate intelligent wives" [Kendall 76]. She studied on her own to prepare for the entrance examination for Columbia's Collegiate Course in the late 1880's, and was admitted to Columbia because of her determination.

4. Rebelliousness

M. Carey Thomas has been characterized as a woman with a rebellious nature because she made no concessions to domesticity in pursuing her goals. She resented the fact that women had been held back for so many years because of their perceived intellectual inferiority [Frankfort 29]. The Wellesley women faculty members of 1910 said that they had been rebellious as children. Many of these women had admired an independent spinster aunt who encouraged their rebelliousness [Palmieri 201].

5. Studious Inclination

In comparing men and women students of Stanford in the early twentieth century, Slosson wrote in 1910, "That women students do as a rule get superior grades is undeniable, but I am inclined to believe that it is due more to their faithfulness to daily duties than to any superiority in natural ability. This, however, may be due to masculine prejudice on my part. They are certainly less apt to indulge excessively in outside activities, or, at any rate, they do not allow them to interfere with their class work" [Slosson 167]. The men at the University of Chicago from 1904 to 1908 had twice the rate of failure as the women, and in 1906 women had more than double the percentage of honors than the men students [Slosson 424]. The women at Stanford and University of Chicago appeared to be more serious about their studies than the men.

A mathematics professor at Oberlin who was interviewed in 1865 gave a similar opinion of women students: " I have found the work done by ladies to be fully equal to that of the gentlemen -- fully; and it has more than once occurred that the best scholar in my class was a lady. Ladies are generally the quickest at recitation, and will repeat long problems more accurately than most of the young men . . . . As to strength and power of application, I know that the advantage is said to lie with the men, but I have not found it so" [Blake 46].

Lida Rose McCabe, in her 1893 book, The American Girl at College, voices her concern that the high standards of women's colleges may deteriorate in the future: "There are indications, however, that higher education [for women] may develop into a fad. In such a crisis, doubtless, feminine

dullards will be coached to college and to a lower scholastic standard, as are the masculine drones infesting our great institutions" [1]. This may explain the differences between the high scholastic standards of women and the lower standards of men mentioned earlier. Because a college education for women was still so new, only the very best women were attracted to it. College education for men was not new, and many men of mediocre ability were attracted to college. Abbe Goodloe's article on women undergraduates concludes, "If the next generation of college women are equally high-minded and studiously inclined, then will be the time for congratulations" [Stone 319].

6. High Moral Standards

In addition to being studious, women college students of the nineteenth century have been characterized as being honest and conscientious. Abbe Carter Goodloe wrote about Wellesley students, "I have known girls who did clerical work for the professors to have in their desks copies of the papers for the examinations which their room-mates were to take the next day, and they were as safe as though locked in the President's private office. Such a state of things could hardly exist in most colleges where the men make a boast of practising every sort of ingenious device for passing an examination except the very simple one of studying for it . . ." [Stone 319]. Women's colleges emphasized religious morals, and may have instilled these high moral standards in students to a higher degree than the men's colleges.

7. Opposed to Feminism

It seems contradictory that these strong-willed, pioneering women were generally opposed to feminism. They wanted the equal opportunity for higher education, but were not yet willing to push for equal opportunities for women in other areas. One reason may have been the emphasis on religion in most of the women's colleges. The Bible emphasizes that women should be subservient to men. Women college students spent time studying the Bible, attending chapel, and listening to sermons, and were probably influenced by repeated exposures to this philosophy [Kendall 131].

In addition, the women who attended college were already risking their marriage prospects and social acceptability by attending college. Women were able to rationalize their intellectual activities if they also appeared to be more womanly by not advocating equal rights for women. Bryn Mawr students were opposed to suffrage because they understood that advocating suffrage would have a negative effect on their careers and their chances of marriage [144].

E. Characteristics of Women College Students of the Late Nineteenth Century

The attitudes of the women college students started to change in the 1890's. Women's colleges were attracting fewer pioneers and more girls who were coming to college for social reasons.

These were wealthy girls with no plans for a career, who were interested in pursuing college life. One Bryn Mawr professor said that these women "with no need to coin their brains, and no definite aim in life" enlivened the atmosphere of the college [Horowitz 147]. In addition, women's colleges started to attract a wider diversity of women: Roman Catholics, Jews, and Blacks [155]. In the early twentieth century, the studious girls which were admired in the nineteenth century became known as "grinds" and "outsiders" [156]. The days of the pioneer women college students were nearly over.

Summary

The precollegiate women provided good role models for the early women college students. They also provided some of the early opportunities for advanced learning to the early college students. The early women college students typically came from wealthy families who supported the education of their daughters. Many parents of the women students were professionals who had been well-educated. Although there were barriers to higher education for women, those women who attended college in the mid- to late nineteenth century showed the determination necessary to overcome the obstacles. Women college students were strong women who were competitive and studious. They were also influenced by the religious emphasis of the women's colleges to be strong in their morals and less strong in their attitudes toward feminism. Many of these early college students later became leaders in women's colleges. Women college students can generally be classified as pioneers until the end of the nineteenth century, when the colleges started to attract greater numbers of women, and consequently, a new clientele.

Part III

Objectives of Early Women College Educators: Why the Colleges were Founded

Introduction

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the motivations of the early women college students and the motivations of their mentors: the educators and founders of the women's colleges. Many of the early college students probably had non-specific motivations for attending college which were later channeled into more specific goals by the women college educators. For this reason there may be some similarities in the objectives of the educators and the motivations of the students. Before examining the motivations of the early women college students, it is important to understand the objectives of the women educators. Through this understanding it will be easier to discern which motivations of the women students were actually reflections of the objectives of the educators.

The women's colleges may be categorized by their purposes and the purposes of their founders: to provide practical preparation for home duties; to provide a solid academic education for women equal to the education of men; to cultivate a concern about social and political issues; to motivate women graduates to participate in charitable activities; and to provide specific preparation for professional opportunities. Some of the colleges and educators encouraged more than one of these purposes. In addition, nearly all of the women's colleges emphasized a religious and Christian purpose [Woody 192]. The characteristics and eventual careers of the women college graduates demonstrate how effectively the objectives were met by the women educators.

A. Practical Education for Women

Catharine Beecher insisted that a woman's education should prepare her for the career of wife and mother [Curti 184]. Beecher became the first recognized expert on domestic economy, later called "home economics." Her publication, Treatise on Domestic Economy, was reprinted from 1841 to 1856 as a "how to" manual for household management [Davis 13]. Mary Lyon echoed the same sentiment in a letter to her mother: "O how immensely important is this work of preparing the daughters of the land to be good mothers" [Curti 185]. Even Alice Freeman Palmer, president of Wellesley in the 1880's, encouraged women to excel in "characteristic employments of housekeeping, teaching, and ministering to the afflicted," although she also advocated intellectual activities which would make women "refined, disciplined, and rational" [Frankfort 41]. Some

called this woman a "cultural hybrid": a woman who was not too intellectual, but not too womanly [43].

B. Providing Equal Opportunities for the Education of Women

The early female seminaries tried to provide the best academic education possible for women. Catharine Beecher criticized the female seminaries because she felt that female institutions should imitate the men's colleges. Emma Willard disagreed: she felt that women needed a seminary education, not a college education. However, Willard believed that academic subjects should be taught in the seminaries rather than "accomplishments" [Woody 2: 138].

Later in the nineteenth century, the more rigorous female colleges wanted to provide an equal educational opportunity for women. From the beginning in 1875, Smith College had as its stated objective an education for young women equal to that available for young men. Both Smith and Vassar wanted to develop students to their fullest potential intellectually and as individual women to produce the "well-rounded woman." Bryn Mawr emphasized the intellectual development of women more than the well-rounded education advocated by the other colleges [Schmidt 131]. Wellesley provided not only an equal educational opportunity for women, but also role models: all of the Wellesley professors were women [Palmieri 196]. The objective of the discipline of the mind was important to these educators. Z. C. Graves of Mary Sharp College said the "aim is not only to impart knowledge, but to direct for a time the powers of the mind which this knowledge has nourished and stimulated." In addition, Graves' objective was to cultivate the judgement and the memory, "teaching the mind how to take up a subject, investigate it and draw conclusions" [Woody 2: 194].

Annie Nathan Meyer had attempted to gain a college education at Columbia, but was only allowed to read the books and to take the examinations. She and other women in the Columbia Collegiate Course for women were not allowed to attend the lectures. Columbia librarian Melvil Dewey encouraged her to start a college for women. Meyer was not sure if she could do it: she was newly married, she had not graduated from college, she was only twenty years old, and she had insufficient money to start a college. She wrote an article for The Nation, which was published in January 1888, outlining the reasons a women's college was necessary for the women of New York [Gordon 504]. Annie Meyer wrote later, "The fact that the job was bristling with difficulties -- some of them seemingly insurmountable -- made it all the more thrilling to undertake, all the more worth while" [Kendall 77]. Barnard College, female counterpart to Columbia, opened in 1889 through the efforts of Annie Nathan Meyer to provide women with an equal opportunity for

higher education [81].

C. Training for Social Reform

Women participated in the abolition movement in the nineteenth century because they were concerned with the prejudices against Blacks. However, through their awareness of the poor treatment of Blacks in American society women began to see some parallels in the inequities toward the female sex. Women students at Oberlin learned to identify the social position of women with the social position of the slaves [Sinclair 98]. Radical women students at Oberlin were a part of the underground railroad for slaves. Women's colleges promoted feminism and ultimately provided the well-educated women necessary to campaign for suffrage [Baker 3].

Emma Willard was active in the peace movement, and expressed opinions on politics, temperance, and abolition, although she did not encourage her students to become involved in these issues. She felt that men were responsible for solving social and political problems [Curti 188].

M. Carey Thomas encouraged her Bryn Mawr students to become "mission-oriented women." The mission was equal status for women in educational arenas: as students and as teachers. Thomas encouraged "sex solidarity" to give female scholars the sense that they were not laboring alone in in their academic pursuits. She assumed that female scholars could "assist women students, as men can not, to tide over the first discouragements of a life of intellectual renunciation" [Frankfort 33].

Vida Scudder, Wellesley professor, encouraged her students to become involved in the labor union movement in the early twentieth century. It was rumoured that she was arrested in 1912 for her labor activities: quite a shocking occurance for the period [Kendall 215].

D. Preparation for Charitable Activities

Alice Freeman Palmer encouraged women to become involved in volunteer activites with charitable organizations as a compromise between domesticity and a career. She believed that because women had more leisure time than men that it was women's responsibility to become involved in educational and philanthropical associations [Frankfort 45]. Cornell, Bryn Mawr, and Vassar were the first colleges to offer courses in social work [Newcomer 20, 28, 53, 99].

E. Career Preparation

The American Women's Education Association was formed in 1852, and approved the idea of college and the professional preparation of women [Woody 2: 195-196]. Bryn Mawr president,

M. Carey Thomas, insisted that women go to college to prepare for self-support rather than "complacent wifehood," whether or not they planned to marry after college [Frankfort 34]. Thomas encouraged girls with a competitive spirit by comparing higher education to a battlefield. She had experienced this battlefield of hostile men students first hand as a student at Cornell [31]. In the late nineteenth century Thomas said, "in the higher grade, that is in college teaching, women are just beginning to compete with men, and this competition is beset with the bitterest professional jealousy that women have ever had to meet except perhaps in medicine" [28]. Thomas said that she wanted to prove that women "can compete with men in the grand fields of literature and science and conjecture" [Kendall 132]. Thomas encouraged women to prove their abilities in academics and research through competition with men in the same arena.

1. Teaching

Catharine Beecher believed that women were better equipped than men to become teachers of children in the new public schools [Curti 186]. In her 1846 publication The Evils Suffered by American Women and American Children: The Causes and the Remedy, she writes of her observations while living in the West: "Ten thousand teachers are now needed in Ohio and Kentucky alone, to furnish schools for more than two hundred thousand children, who otherwise must grow up in utter ignorance" [Davis 78]. Beecher encouraged women to use their education to teach these children in the west. She established a chain of "normal" schools in the midwest in the 1840's for this purpose [Polakoff 312]. Emma Willard encouraged state support of female seminaries to train female teachers who would be willing to work for less pay than male teachers [Curti 189].

Although teaching was encouraged by the early women educators as a proper occupation for a single woman, the teaching profession soon became a training ground for feminists because teaching was the only common profession open to an intelligent woman before the middle of the nineteenth century [Sinclair 100].

F. Religious Motivations

According to the Report of the Commissioner of Education in 1881, "with few exceptions they [women's colleges] are conducted under the auspices of religious denominations [Woody 2: 198]. In a letter to her mother, Mary Lyon wrote that the institution she was building would be instrumental in helping the conversion of the world [Curti 181]. In the twenty-fifth anniversary Memorial book for Mount Holyoke, Mary Lyon's objective is stated: "At first . . . the preparation of teachers was a prominent object in her mind. But she came at length to concentrate her energies on making her pupils well-educated Christian women: leaving Providence to direct the special

application of their powers" [Memorial 34]. Catharine Beecher's students studied Bible verses as a means to learning morality and social duties [Curti 182]. Emma Willard believed that religious and moral instruction was "the true end of all education" [Sinclair 95].

6. Educating the Whole Woman

The presidents of Vassar, Wellesley, Smith, and Mount Holyoke insisted, in the late nineteenth century, "We do not aim to train a woman for a sphere, profession, or calling. We train her simply to be a whole woman, a power for the highest good in any community in which her lot may be cast, and in no position is her influence so potent as in the home. Why should women be expected to have definite plans? All must await developments, and whatever those developments may be, the college-bred woman is better equipped to meet then" [McCabe 14].

Summary

The early college educators were hoping to prepare their students for several specific purposes. The early colleges and academies emphasized the practical household skills more than the later, more academically oriented, women's colleges. Because teachers were needed, preparing women for teaching careers was a common objective of several colleges. Any career, paid or unpaid, which would allow a female graduate to use her education in the service of society was considered a practical and positive reason for the higher education of women. All women's colleges prepared women to make their own way in the world.

Part IV

Women's Motivations for Attending College

Introduction

It is difficult to ascertain the exact motivations of the women who were the early college students. However, it is possible, through examining a sample of notable women, to gain a better sense of the reasons many women attended college. The motivations can be broken down into five major categories: love of learning, career motivations, a desire for social reform, religious fervor, and a simple wish to avoid petty society life. For some of the women there was more than one motivation for choosing to attend college. Because this is only a small sample, these reasons cannot be accurately projected over the entire population of women students of the nineteenth century. But it is interesting to note the similarities in the motivations of many of these women, and it is safe to assume that these motivations may have also been the motivations for at least some of the unknown women college students. Those women college students who either did not graduate, or who did not gain the noteriety of the women profiled may have had very different reasons for attending college which we may never know.

A. Love of Learning, and Equal Educational Opportunities

Several early college students were motivated to continue their learning through the example and encouragement of close friends and relatives. Alice Freeman Palmer had always loved learning, but it was her fiance Thomas D. Barclay, a recent college graduate, who whetted her appetite for higher education. Ironically, she decided not to marry Barclay so that she could pursue a college education [James 3: 4]. Myra Reynolds, who later became a respected English instructor at the University of Chicago, was originally motivated to attend Vassar because her older sister had graduated from Vassar. Before attending Vassar she had graduated from the Pennsylvania State Normal School at Mansfield, and had been teaching for several years [James 3: 139]. Lucy Salmon, later a Vassar scholar and professor of history, had a cousin who was preparing for college who convinced her to also apply for study at the University of Michigan. Salmon first attended the Ann Arbor high school for preparatory study, and entered the University of Michigan in 1872 [James 3: 224]. Milicent Shinn was influenced by her cousin Edmund Clark, later a noted psychologist, to continue her education. She attended the University of California and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1880. Shinn later became the first woman to earn a doctorate at the University of California for her work in documenting the early development

of a child [James 3: 286].

Even in the late nineteenth century, there were not many precedents set for the college education of girls. An article written by Abbe Carter Goodloe in the May, 1898 issue of Scribner's Magazine provides an enlightening description of the process by which colleges were selected by men and women. "A man decides upon a certain college because his father and his grandfather went there before him . . . But the girl has no such precedents . . . 'Going to college' is yet so new and important a thing with her, and is so frequently for the purpose of studying, that she conscientiously decides upon the institution where she can get the hardest and most thorough course in her most difficult elective" [Stone 316]. Alice Freeman Palmer chose to attend the University of Michigan in 1872 because the requirements of women's colleges were not as difficult at that time [Frankfort 18]. M. Carey Thomas also chose Cornell for its rigorous program [30]. Many of the early women students of Antioch, such as Olympia Brown, were attracted by the college's reputation for innovation: few rules, men and women learning together, and equal opportunities for the education of women [Rury and Harper 493]. Unfortunately, these women found the reality somewhat different from the reputation: Antioch president Horace Mann did not believe in mixing the sexes in the classroom, and did not believe women should pursue careers [Rury and Harper 502]. These women enjoyed the challenge of learning. They also had a strong desire to receive the most rigorous education possible, because they wanted an education which was as close as possible to the education provided for men.

B. Career Motivations

Some women attended college because they wanted the opportunity for a career before marrying. Most of the young women attending Wellesley in the late nineteenth century planned to make their living by using what they had learned in college [Stone 328]. Unfortunately, there were few opportunities for women to actually use their college education, and those were generally restricted to teaching. The opportunities to enter other professions were not open to women, even though graduates of the best women's colleges were as well prepared as the graduates of the men's colleges [Baker 9].

1. Teaching

In the very early days of Mount Holyoke, teaching was considered the only valid reason for women to pursue advanced education [Kendall 93]. In the latter part of the nineteenth century many girls were motivated to attend college in order to teach in the schools of the American western frontier [100]. Teachers were desperately needed, and this was an opportunity for women

to serve humanity by using their education. By the 1890's one quarter of the girls entering college were motivated to attend college in order to pursue a teaching career [McCabe 157].

Quite a few women who attended college had already been employed as teachers and wished to further their education. Early in the nineteenth century, of the first eighty students to attend Mary Lyon's Mount Holyoke Seminary in 1837, many were in their twenties and had been teaching in village schools [Kendall 93]. Later in the nineteenth century, of the first twenty-seven women to attend Radcliffe (then, the Harvard Annex), many were teachers [65]. Some women had been working as teachers in order to raise the money necessary for attending college. Others viewed teaching as a stepping stone to greater opportunities in other fields [McCabe 158].

2. Professional Careers

Early women college students had various reasons for pursuing specific careers. Ellen Swallow Richards started her studies of chemistry at Vassar in 1868, and continued at M.I.T. in 1872 in order to help her father in his business of manufacturing building stone. Although this was her original motivation, she became a chemistry instructor at M.I.T. in 1876 [Bernard 10]. Marion Talbot was later influenced to study sanitation by family friend Ellen Swallow Richards. Talbot attended M.I.T. and graduated in 1888 with a B.S. degree. In 1890 she became a domestic science instructor at Wellesley College [James 3: 423].

Some women pursued a career as an alternative to marriage. Florence Sabin believed that because she was not pretty it was unlikely that she would be able to attract a husband, so she planned to have a career instead. She studied science at Smith, and became the first female student, and the first female professor at Johns Hopkins [Bernard 12]. Elizabeth Blackwell wanted to remain single, and she decided that becoming a doctor was the best insurance against marriage. Because she had always been repulsed by the human body, she also viewed medical study as a great personal challenge. From her girlhood she had continually challenged herself, so studying to become a doctor was consistent with her personality. She graduated from Geneva College in New York in 1849 [James 1: 161-162].

Mary Calkins graduated from Smith College and became an instructor of Greek at Wellesley College. She was promised a teaching position in the newly created psychology department of Wellesley if she prepared herself with an additional year of graduate study. This was Mary Calkins' motivation for earning her doctorate in psychology from Harvard [James 1: 278-279].

Carrie Burnham Kilgore was a woman who was driven to pursue her higher education in more than one professional field. She was the first woman to earn both a medical degree and a law degree. After having taught school for several years, she wanted to increase her knowledge of

physiology. She was accepted to the Hygeio-Therapeutic College in New York City as a member of the first female class admitted to the Bellevue Hospital clinics. She earned her medical degree in 1865 and finished a diploma from the Boston Normal Institute for Physical Education the same year. In 1865 she started to study law informally with Philadelphia lawyer Damon Kilgore, whom she later married. She was motivated to study law because of the inequities of the treatment of women. In 1881, after many years of applying to law schools, she was finally admitted formally to the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Two years later she became the first female graduate. Carrie Kilgore took over her husband's law practice after he died in 1888, and in 1890 she was admitted to the Supreme Court [James 2: 330]. Carrie Kilgore's motivations for her education changed over the years, but she was always career-motivated.

C. Social Reform

Lucy Stone went to college to prepare for a career as a public lecturer in the anti-slavery movement. She attended Mount Holyoke for a short period of time, but left because her strong anti-slavery attitudes did not fit in with the rather conservative atmosphere of Mount Holyoke. At the age of 25, Stone entered Oberlin, where she felt more comfortable with her radical views [Lasser and Merrill 1-2].

Fanny Coppin was born as a slave, and was freed as a young girl when an aunt had saved sufficient money to buy her freedom. She eventually worked as a servant in the household of author Goerge Henry Calvert. With Calvert's encouragement, Coppin started to read and study. Her motivation for obtaining a higher education was to "get an education and become a teacher to my people." Coppin graduated from Oberlin College in 1865, and later became the principal of the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia [James 1: 383].

D. Religious Motivations

In the early years of Mount Holyoke, many girls attended college to become missionaries in distant exotic lands. Although they were a minority of the total population of students, they received more publicity than many other graduates of Mount Holyoke. Most became wives of missionaries, although a few daring women actually went overseas on their own [Kendall 98]. Antoinette Brown was even more daring: her goal was to devote her life to a religious calling as an ordained minister [Lasser and Merrill 2]. She attended Oberlin from 1846 to 1850 because it had the only school of theology which was open to women.

E. Escape from Society Life

The majority of Wellesley students in the late nineteenth century went to college for something more than the "society" activities they may were accustomed to at home [Stone 328]. Ellen Swallow Richards explained to her parents, while she was in college, her motivations for attending college: "My aim is now, as it has been for the past ten years, to make myself a true woman, one worthy of the name, and one who will unshrinkingly follow the path which God marks out, one whose aim is to do all of the good she can in the world, and not to be one of the delicate little dolls or the silly fools who make up the bulk of American women, slaves to society and fashion" [Bernard 9]. M. Carey Thomas had similar sentiments. She was determined to show ". . . that a woman can be a woman and a true one without having all her time engrossed by dress and society" [17].

Summary

The women's motivations for attending college, as shown in these few profiles, were varied. Some women were influenced by outside influences and interests which were developed prior to attending college. Some women were motivated by others who saw their potential and encouraged them to attend college. Others were more self-motivated to move toward a specific career in teaching, in the professions, or in social reform. A few women were motivated for social reasons: they wanted to avoid marriage, or they wanted to avoid the superficial society life of their wealthy family and friends. All of the women profiled had personal reasons for choosing the unusual path of attending college.

Part V

The Early Women College Graduates:
The Influence of the College Experience

Introduction

The educators of women had various specific objectives. Before entering college, some of the women college students had specific motivations for attending college. Those with particular motivations may have been influenced by their college experiences less than those with non-specific motivations, however the college experience provided these women with the education and the further motivation they required to distinguish themselves in the future.

How did the colleges influence the later paths of their graduates? The influence of the objectives of the colleges can be found first by examining the personal characteristics of the college graduates; and second by examining the various occupations of the women college graduates.

A. Personal Characteristics of Female College Graduates

1. Differences in graduates of female colleges.

Those girls who attended the "Seven Sisters" colleges in the late nineteenth century were characterized by Helen M. Bennett in the Woman's Home Companion in November, 1920: "If you give a piece of work to graduates of the women's colleges, the Vassar girl will sit down and talk about it, the Bryn Mawr girl will philosophize over it, Mount Holyoke will pray over it, Wellesley will go down to the library and read all about it, and Smith will go out and do it. . . " [Baker 3].

M. Carey Thomas encouraged Bryn Mawr women to be self-sufficient by pursuing a career. Alice Freeman Palmer encouraged Wellesley women to pursue a healthy mixture of domesticity and intellectual activity. Consequently, it is not surprising to find that of the graduates between 1889 and 1908 ninety percent of Bryn Mawr graduates listed some occupation, whereas only thirty-five percent of Wellesley graduates pursued a career [Frankfort 58].

2. Preference for Female Company.

A major reason for the preference of female company was the fact that women college graduates were considered rather unusual at the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century. For this reason the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (ACA) was formed in 1881. Women who were college graduates had a tendency to feel isolated and welcomed

opportunities to communicate with other women who had been through the same collegiate experience. A New Hampshire woman college graduate who went to Omaha to teach said, "I felt as if I had been flung out into space, and the notices of these meetings were the only threads that connected me with the things I had known" [Frankfort 86]. ACA later became the American Association of University Women.

The Wellesley faculty was made up entirely of single women. Thirty percent of the Wellesley faculty were graduates of Wellesley. The "Wellesley marriage" was common: pairs of women faculty members who lived together and whose lives revolved around the college [Palmieri 203]. In addition to the romantic love which was a part of the "Wellesley marriage," the relationships between the women were also intellectual. The Wellesley faculty members believed that they were the pioneers of women's higher education, and for this reason they were anxious to encourage each other and learn from each other [206].

Women who became leaders in the movement for women's education were also generally unmarried women who devoted their lives to the cause of higher education for women. M. Carey Thomas, president of Bryn Mawr, surrounded herself with female friends and female college students [Frankfort 33]. Alice Freeman Palmer married after having been president of Wellesley College [22].

Although women's colleges were constantly battling the image of women graduate "spinsters," the facts showed that fewer women college graduates married than women in the general population. Academy women graduates of Mount Holyoke between 1837 and 1850 married at the age of twenty-six, but the women in the general population married at twenty-one. Nineteen percent of Mount Holyoke graduates never married [Solomon 31]. Forty-seven percent of Bryn Mawr graduates of 1889-1908 married, compared with eighty-eight percent of all American women [Frankfort 54]. In 1895 a report came out which stated that at least half of all women college graduates remained spinsters. Only thirty-eight percent of all of the Vassar graduates between 1867 and 1894 married [Kendall 127]. The percentages of married alumnae were somewhat higher in coeducational colleges. Of the forty women attending Oberlin in 1840, all but one were married by 1860 [Solomon 31]. Thirty of the forty-six women graduates of Antioch between 1853 and 1876 married [Schmidt, p. 133].

The reasons for remaining single varied with each woman, but it is probably safe to assume that many women found new career paths opening up to them because of their college education. Their horizons had been broadened because of their rigorous intellectual experiences in college. The college graduates were provided with an alternative which was not generally available to the

average woman in the population: a career other than the traditional career of wife and mother.

3. Desire for Further Education

Of the 110 women who earned a Yale Ph. D. between 1892 and 1916, forty were graduates of Smith, Wellesley, and Vassar, and the rest were from western coeducational colleges [Kelley 283]. Some women chose to pursue more education for the love of learning. But many women who pursued graduate education had a specific purpose in mind: becoming a college professor, or pursuing a career in one of the professions. After receiving the Ph.D. from Yale, ninety-nine percent of the women graduates went on to careers [Kelley 283].

B. Careers

In the latter half of the nineteenth century it became more common for women college graduates to pursue a career. As a result of M. Carey Thomas' encouragement, fifty-three percent of all Bryn Mawr graduates between 1889 and 1908 chose a career over marriage, and fifty-three percent of those Bryn Mawr graduates who married had some kind of occupation during their marriage [Frankfort 54]. According to 1870 census figures, 1,836,288 women in America were employed [Foster 20].

1. Teaching

In the nineteenth century there were few career opportunities for women other than teaching. Before a college education was generally available, Mary Lyon's Mount Holyoke Seminary provided hundreds of teachers for the new American public schools [Sinclair 96]. An astounding eighty-two percent of Mount Holyoke alumnae between 1838 and 1850 taught school for at least five years [Horowitz 27]. Of the 46 women students who graduated from Antioch, a coeducational college, between 1853 and 1876, eighteen became teachers [Schmidt 133]. Two-thirds of all teachers in 1870 were women [Foster 21]. Some women chose to teach before moving on to another career. Of the women listed in Notable American Women, forty-six percent of the women born between 1790 and 1830 had been teachers at some point in their lives [Solomon 34].

2. Higher Education and Research

Mary Atkins was an early graduate of Oberlin who became involved in the education of women. After graduation in 1845 she became principal of the Ladies Department of Oberlin. She then became the principal of Girl's High School in Columbus, Ohio, and later became the principal of the Benecia Female Academy in California which became Mills College [Keep, pp. 24-25].

Ten percent of the Bryn Mawr graduates of 1889 to 1908 went on to become college professors [Frankfort 5]. Seventy-six percent of the women who received Yale doctorates became

involved in education, and sixty-four percent were in higher education [Kelley 283-284].

Several women who graduated from coeducational Cornell in the nineteenth century achieved distinguished careers in higher education and research. Bryn Mawr president M. Carey Thomas was a Cornell graduate. Julia Thomas Irvine was a professor of Greek at Wellesley College who became president of Wellesley in 1895. Susanna Gage was a highly respected embryologist. Anna Comstock became a leader in the nature study movement, and was recognized for her lectures and textbooks [Conable 89-90].

3. Writing

Other than teaching, writing was the only other career option open to well-educated women of the early nineteenth century. As colleges emphasized creative writing classes, many women college students became more interested in pursuing a career in popular writing [Solomon 35]. Many educated women found success as poets and novelists: Catherine Sedgwick, Lydia Sigourney, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. As editor of Godey's Lady's Book, Sarah Josepha Hale was highly influential among the large number of women readers [Polakof 312].

4. Professions

Of the women employed in 1870, only five percent were in the professions. Only five women were listed as lawyers, justices, and judges, and thirty-five women were editors or reporters [Foster 20-21]. Of the women Antioch graduates of 1853 to 1876, two became doctors, and one became a minister [Schmidt 133].

5. Entrepreneurial Activities

Cornell graduate Kate Gleason was a pioneer in suburban housing developments, the first woman member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the first woman president of a bank [Conable 90].

By the early twentieth century the career situation for women had changed, according to Mary Crawford. She wrote in her 1905 book that women graduates are not automatically going into teaching, but rather "into trades and professions which offer more opportunity for individual resource and individual enterprise than does the profession of the pedagogue" [Crawford 291]. She gave many examples of the women entrepreneurs: two women graduates who opened a bakery in Cambridge [292]; two Wellesley graduates who opened a tea room "for hungry girls" in Wellesley [297]; two Smith graduates who started an expensive upscale laundry service outside of Boston [298]; and another woman college graduate who opened an employment service to assist ladies in finding good servants [299].

C. Careers in Social Reform, Charitable Work and Religion

1. Social Reform

Well-known reformers, such as Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown, were early graduates of Oberlin [Sinclair 98]. Frances Kelley, 1882 graduate of Cornell, was a founder of the NAACP, and dedicated her life to the reform of working conditions and wages for women and children [Conable 89-90]. Another Cornell graduate, Gail Laughlin, was also an advocate of equal rights for women. Laughlin was the founder and first president of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs [92].

Because of their concern for the equality of blacks, some women college graduates became involved in teaching newly freed slaves after the Civil War. One graduate of Mount Holyoke, Sarah Dickey, established the Mount Harmon School for Colored Girls in Mississippi [Kendall 100]. In addition, many black women college graduates devoted their lives to teaching for the purpose of racial uplift. Between 1790 and 1870, over half of the black women listed in Notable American Women taught school [Solomon 40]. Fanny Jackson Coppin, Anna J. Cooper, and Mary Church Terrell were black women graduates of Oberlin who became noted educators of blacks. From 1869-1901 Fanny Coppin was the head of the oldest private high school for blacks, the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia. In Washington, D. C. the first public high school for blacks was initially headed by Mary Jane Patterson in 1869 [Perkins 27].

2. Charitable Work

By World War I, college-educated women believed that charitable work was their responsibility. This attitude was particularly demonstrated by an ACA (Association of Collegiate Alumnae) statement of 1917: "Resolved that we . . . unreservedly place ourselves at the disposal of the President and the Government of the U.S. for any form of service which we may be able to render in the present crisis . . ." [Frankfort 100]. It was not uncommon for married college-educated women to help others by using their education for non-paid work in charitable organizations. The willingness to help others was probably influenced by the moral and religious beliefs instilled in women by the women's colleges.

4. Religious Work

Because of the religious emphasis of the women's colleges, some graduates became missionaries overseas. Sixty Mount Holyoke graduates had become foreign missionaries by 1859 [Horowitz 27]. The founders of Mills College in California, Dr. Cyrus Mills and Susan Tolman Mills, had been missionaries in Ceylon and the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) before taking over the Benecia Academy and forming it into a well-respected women's college [Keep 39]. Susan Tolman

Mills was a graduate of Mount Holyoke and a great admirer of Mary Lyon who carried on the religious emphasis of Mount Holyoke at Mills College [37-38].

Two exceptional women felt compelled to become ordained ministers. Antoinette Brown became the first woman to graduate from a school of Theology in the United States when she graduated from Oberlin in 1851 [Woody 2: 368]. Olympia Brown, 1860 graduate of Antioch, became the country's first ordained female Universalist minister [Rury and Harper 481].

Summary

Many women college graduates chose a career and female companionship over marriage. A few chose non-traditional careers in the professions, but most women graduates continued their involvement in education. Most women who were involved in education were school teachers, although as time went on a number of women became involved in the higher education of women.

Women's colleges also provided an education for women who later became active in social reform, charitable work, and religious work. The major influence of colleg on the lives of the women graduates appears to have been a liberalizing influence. The women graduates were able to liberate themselves from the traditional women's roles to participate in more intellectually stimulating careers, paid or unpaid.

Conclusion: Implications for Today

The early women college students were pioneers. They had a difficult time simply obtaining an opportunity for a college education because college was not thought to be necessary for the women of the nineteenth century. Women were not well prepared for college. Many families did not have sufficient resources to pay for a college education for their daughters. Until the late nineteenth century, there were few colleges that would even accept women. There were many obstacles to overcome, but the small percentage of nineteenth century women who were early women college students had the motivation and determination to obtain a college education.

As a result of their efforts these women were able to reap the rewards of an intellectually stimulating career. Some pursued a career in education or higher education, a few pursued a career in the professions, some became involved in major social reforms, and others used their education to serve in charitable organizations. In addition, the women were able to use their college education to continue to educate themselves through reading and through interaction with other educated women. The college-educated women had a better opportunity for a rich and stimulating life than women who were not college-educated in the nineteenth century.

The fears voiced by several of the nineteenth century women have come to pass. The women attending college today include the exceptional students, but also the students of mediocre ability. When the number of women college students increased through the twentieth century, the overall quality of the students decreased. Today's women college students are not the same as the pioneers of the nineteenth century.

Are there any pioneer college students today who are comparable to the women of the nineteenth century? Although there are groups which are underrepresented in the colleges today, it is difficult to call them "pioneers." Presumably, everyone in America has the opportunity to obtain a higher education if they want it badly enough. Yet, for some, the obstacles are the same today as they were for the women college students in the nineteenth century: lack of money for college, poor preparation in high school, lack of parental encouragement, and possibly a feeling within the cultural group that a college education is not necessary or desirable.

Today's pioneers are more difficult to see: they are not of one particular gender, or of one particular ethnic group. But it is clear that that small percentage of highly motivated pioneers is still with us. One pioneer is the Vietnamese immigrant who comes to the community college with poor English skills and no money for college. He studies biology, earns a scholarship to the University of California at Irvine, and becomes an obstetrician specializing in difficult births at

the UCLA Medical Center. Another pioneer is the female immigrant from Mexico who also comes to the community college with poor English skills, but a strong desire to succeed in a broadcasting career. She gains the education necessary to work as an account executive for a major Los Angeles Spanish radio station. Pioneer college students may come from socio-economic groups in which a college education is not encouraged. Other pioneers are those with learning disabilities, and those with poor high school preparation. Today's pioneers are equally as exceptional and rare as the early women college students. It requires a great deal of courage and determination for today's pioneer college students to break out of the mold to pursue a better life through a college education.

What are the implications for college educators? By understanding the obstacles of the early women college students, today's educators may see similarities in the difficulties facing the pioneer college students of today. It is important for college educators to understand that today there are still some highly motivated pioneer college students. It is also important to know that today's pioneers are usually invisible in an average college classroom. College educators may become aware of student difficulties without realizing that the student is highly motivated, but has many more obstacles to overcome than other college students. Spotty attendence may be caused by a need to work, or family responsibilities. Poor test scores may be caused by poor English skills or learning disabilities.

Understanding the new pioneers does not mean lowering standards to accomodate those who have difficulties in college. In fact, the early women's colleges continued to make the requirements more academically rigorous! When the women's colleges raised their standards, they also provided assistance for those with poor preparation through a "preparatory department." Today's college educators may also provide opportunities for success, and encouragement to continue. Encouragement might include tutoring programs, remedial education, ESL classes, work-study plans, and role models who were able to overcome the same difficulties.

In the early nineteenth century the women who were founders of colleges and professors in early women's colleges provided the necessary role models and encouragement for the early women college students. Through their encouragement, the highly motivated pioneer women college students completed their college education, and went on to greater accomplishments. Today's college educators may provide the same encouragement for a different group of highly motivated pioneer college students. With opportunities to learn, and encouragement from college educators, today's highly motivated pioneers may also achieve their goals.

References

Baker, Liva. I'm Radcliffe! Fly Me! The Seven Sisters and the Failure of Women's Education. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.: 1976.

Berkin, Carol Ruth, and Mary Beth Norton. Women of America, A History. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979.

Bernard, Jessie. Academic Women. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1964.

Blake, Sophia Jex. A Visit to Some American Schools and Colleges. London: MacMillan and Company, 1867.

Boorstin, Daniel J. The Americans: The Colonial Experience. New York: Vintage Books, 1958.

Boorstin, Daniel J. The Americans: The Democratic Experience. New York: Random House, 1973.

Brink, J. R., ed. Female Scholars - A Tradition of Learned Women before 1800. St. Albans, Vermont: Eden Press Women's Publications, 1980.

Burstyn, Joan N. Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984.

Conable, Charlotte Williams. Women at Cornell, The Myth of Equal Education. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977.

Cott, Nancy F. The Bonds of Womanhood. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977.

Crawford, Mary Caroline. The College Girl of America and the Institutions Which Make Her What She Is. Boston: L.C. Page & Company, 1905.

Curti, Merle. The Social Ideas of American Educators. Totowa, New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1966.

Davis, David Brion. Antebellum American Culture. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Company, 1979.

"Educational Attainment and Monthly Income," The Chronicle of Higher Education 14 October 1987: A36.

Eells, Walter Crosby. "Earned Doctorates for Women in the Nineteenth Century." AAUP Bulletin 42 (1956): 647.

Foster, Grace R. "Social Change in Relation to Curricular Development in Collegiate Education for Women." Ph. D. thesis, Columbia University, 1934.

Frankfort, Roberta. Collegiate Women, Domesticity and Career in Turn-of-the-Century America. New York: New York University Press, 1977.

Furnas, J. C. The Americans, A Social History of the United States 1587-1914. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1969.

Glazer, Penina Migdal, and Miriam Slater. Unequal Colleagues, The Entrance of Women into the Professions, 1890-1940. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1987.

Gordon, Lynn D. "Annie Nathan Meyer and Barnard College: Mission and Identity in Women's Higher Education, 1889-1950." History of Education Quarterly 26 (19860: 503-522.

Green, Elizabeth Alden. Mary Lyon and Mount Holyoke, Opening the Gates. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1979.

Hill, Bridget. Eighteenth-Century Women: An Anthology. Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987.

Horowitz, Helen L. Alma Mater. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Ingalls, Zoe. "As Harvard Marks Its Birthday This Week, U.S. Higher Education Enters Its 351st Year." The Chronicle of Higher Education 3 Sept. 1986: 1, 65-67.

James, Edward T., ed. Notable American Women. 3 vols. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971.

James, Janet Wilson. Changing Ideas about Women in the United States, 1776-1825. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1981.

Keep, Rosalind A. Fourscore Years: A History of Mills College. Oakland, California: Mills College, 1931.

Kelley, Brooks Mather. Yale, A History. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

Kendall, Elaine. "Peculiar Institutions," An Informal History of the Seven Sisters Colleges. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1975.

Kerber, Linda K. Women of the Republic, Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1980.

Lasser, Carol, ed. Educating Men and Women Together. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987.

Lasser, Carol, and Marlene Merrill, eds. Soul Mates -- The Oberlin Correspondence of Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown 1846-1850. Oberlin, Ohio: Oberlin College, 1936.

McCabe, Linda Rose. The American Girl at College. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1893.

Memorial Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary. Springfield, Massachusetts: Samuel Bowles & Company, 1842.

Merriam, Eve, ed. Growing Up Female in America. Boston: Beacon Press, 1987.

Morison, Samuel Eliot. The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1956.

Morison, Samuel Eliot. The Oxford History of the American People. 3 vols. New York: Mentor Books, 1972.

Morison, Samuel Eliot. Three Centuries of Harvard 1636-1936. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1937.

Morison, Samuel Eliot, and Henry Steele Commager. The Growth of the American Republic. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Newcomer, Mabel. A Century of Higher Education for American Women. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1959.

Norton, Mary Beth. Liberty's Daughters, The Revolutionary Experience of American Women 1750-1850. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980.

Palmer, Alice Freeman. Why Go to College? New York: Thomas Crowell & Company, 1897.

Palmieri, Patricia A. "Here Was Fellowship: A Social Portrait of Academic Women at Wellesley College, 1895-1920." History of Education Quarterly 23 (1983): 195-214.

Perkins, Linda M. "The Impact of the 'Cult of True Womanhood' on the Education of Black Women." Journal of Social Issues 39 (3)1983: 17-28.

Pitt, Leonard. We Americans. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1976.

Polakoff, K., et al. Generations of Americans. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976.

Rogers, Everett M., and F. Floyd Shoemaker. Communication of Innovations, A Cross Cultural Approach, Second Edition. New York: Free Press, 1971.

Rossiter, Margaret W. "Doctorates for American Women, 1868-1907." History of Education Quarterly 22 (1982): 159-184.

Rudolph, Frederick, ed. Essays on Education in the Early Republic. Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1965.

Rudolph, Frederick. The American College and University: A History. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962.

Rury, John, and Glenn Harper. "The Trouble with Coeducation: Mann and Women at Antioch, 1853-1860." History of Education Quarterly 26 (1986): 481-502.

Schmidt, George P. The Liberal Arts College, A Chapter in American Cultural History. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1957.

Sinclair, Andrew. The Emancipation of the American Woman. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965.

Slosson, Edwin E. Great American Universities. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1910.

Smith, Wilson, ed. Theories of Education in Early America. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1973.

Solomon, Barbara Miller. In the Company of Educated Women. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

Starrett, Helen Ekin. The Future of Educated Women. Chicago: Jansen, McClurg, and Company, 1885.

Stock, Phyllis. Better than Rubies A History of Women's Education. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1978.

Stone, James C., and Donald P. DeNevi, eds. Portraits of the American University 1890-1910. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 1971.

Talbot, Marion, and Lois Kimball Rosenberry. The History of the American Association of University Women 1881-1931. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931.

Taylor, James Monroe. Before Vassar Opened. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914.

Willard, Emma. An Address to the Public; Particularly to the Members of the Legislature of New-York, proposing a Plan Improving Female Education. Middlebury, Vermont: J. W. Copeland, 1819.

Wood, Frances A. Earliest Years at Vassar. Poughkeepsie, N.Y.: The Vassar College Press, 1909.

Woody, Thomas. A History of Women's Education in the United States. 2 vols. New York: The Science Press, 1929.